

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
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AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 6602

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PK
SUBJECT: POLITICAL SITUATION IN PAKISTAN

1. THE ROAD TO A PNA/GOVERNMENT ACCORD HAS TURNED OUT TO BE ROCKIER THAN EARLIER EXPECTED. THE PNA REPORTEDLY PLANS TO DELIVER WHAT IS BEING DESCRIBED IN THE PRESS AS A "TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT" DRAFT OF THE ACCORD TO FINANCE MINISTER AND PPP NEGOTIATOR HAFEEZ PIRZADA ON THE MORNING OF JUNE 28. THE PNA HAS DENIED DELIVERING ANY ULTIMATUMS TO THE GOVERNMENT, WHILE SAYING THEY WANT A REPLY WITHIN TWO DAYS, BUT THE PPP IS NEVERTHELESS INSISTING THAT THEY ARE BEING THREATENED BY THE OPPOSITION AND THAT
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THEY WILL NEVER BOW TO PRESSURE.

2. THE OUTCOME OF THE NEGOTIATIONS DOES NOT DEPEND ON WHETHER A REASONABLE AND EQUITABLE AGREEMENT CAN BE DRAFTED. RATHER IT DEPENDS ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S ASSESSMENT OF HIS POLITICAL SURVIVABILITY. IF BHUTTO BELIEVES HE MUST HAVE THE ACCORD TO AVOID BEING IMMEDIATELY

EJECTED FROM POWER, HE WILL SIGN IT REGARDLESS OF WHAT CONCESSIONS HE MUST MAKE. HOWEVER, IF HE THINKS HE CAN SURVIVE A FAILURE TO AGREE ON AN ELECTION ACCORD, HE WILL NOT SIGN IT REGARDLESS OF THE CONCESSIONS THE PNA MIGHT MAKE.

3. VARIOUS SIGNS STILL POINT TO THE PROBABILITY OF AN AGREEMENT BEING SIGNED. PPP NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS HAVE BEEN TOLD TO PREPARE FOR AN ELECTION, THE PPP CONTINUES TO HOLD DIVISIONAL CONVENTIONS TO DISCUSS ELECTION TACTICS, AND LARGE-SCALE ARRESTS-WHICH USUALLY PRECEDE GOVERNMENT/PNA CONFRONTATIONS-HAVE NOT YET TAKEN PLACE. HOWEVER, NOT KNOWING BHUTTO'S PERSONAL ASSESSMENT OF HIS POLITICAL CHANCES MEANS NO ONE CAN PREDICT WITH CERTAINTY THE OUTCOME OF THE TALKS.

4. SPECULATION PERSISTS THAT THE PM MAY BE CONSIDERING A THIRD ALTERNATIVE WHICH WOULD BE TO SIGN THE ACCORD BUT THEN BACK OUT OF IT SHORTLY BEFORE THE SCHEDULED ELECTION ON THE GROUNDS THAT TURMOIL IN THE COUNTRY, INCITED BY PPP WORKERS IF NECESSARY, PREVENTS THE HOLDING OF FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS. HE WOULD FOLLOW SUCH A COURSE ONLY IF HE THOUGHT HE WOULD BE OVERWHELMINGLY DEFEATED IN THE ELECTIONS AND IF HE WERE REASONABLY CERTAIN THE ARMY WOULD SUPPORT HIM. IT WOULD BE A CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL RISK AND IF IT FAILED HE WOULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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FINISHED POLITICALLY IN PAKISTAN. WHEREAS IF HE ALLOWED THE ELECTIONS TO BE HELD, AND LOST, HE STILL COULD HARBOR THE SLIGHT HOPE THAT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO RETURN TO POWER IF THE PNA BROKE APART AFTER WINNING THE ELECTION.

5. ANTI-AMERICANISM RETURNED TO PAKISTAN'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRESS ON JUNE 28 AFTER A SHORT HIATUS. A PPI SORRY, OBVIOUSLY PLANTED BY THE INFORMATION MINISTRY, APPEARED IN SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS REPORTING US "EMBARRASSMENT" OVER THE O'KEEFE MEMORANDUM WHICH PREDICTED THE IMMINENT DOWNFALL OF THE PRIME MINISTER. THIS ISSUE HAS NOT BEEN HIGHLIGHTED IN THE PAK PRESS AND ITS APPEARANCE NOW MAY PRESAGE THE PPP USING THE MEMO IN THE DAYS AHEAD AS PART OF THE ANTI-AMERICAN CAMPAIGN. KARACHI'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY NEWS, ON JUNE 24, UNDER THE BANNER HEADLINE "WHERE IS HE?" QUESTIONED THE WHEREABOUTS OF AMBASSADOR FARLAND WHO WAS ALLEGEDLY SIGHTED IN PAKISTAN DURING THE RECENT POLITICAL AGITATION. THE NEWSPAPER ALSO CONTENDS THAT FARLAND, WHOM THEY DESCRIBE AS A MEMBER OF THE CIA'S TOP HIERARCHY, ENTERED PAKISTAN ON A FASE PASSPORT AND THAT HIS EXIT FROM THE COUNTRY IS NOT RECORDED AT ANY OFFICIAL CHECKPOINTS. A SECOND ARTICLE WHICH APPEARS IMMEDIATELY BELOW THE

FARLAND STORY SAYS, " THE RIDDLE OF THE SUICIDE OR SUSPECTED
MURDER OF A HIGH AMERICAN EMBASSY OFFICIAL IN PESHAWAR
SOMETIME BACK ALSO CONTINUES TO PUZZLE PEOPLE HERE."
THIS IS UNDOUBTEDLY A REFERENCE TO AN AID CONTRACT EMPLOYEE
WHO COMMITTED SUICIDE IN PESHAWAR EARLY IN THE YEAR.
HUMMEL

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